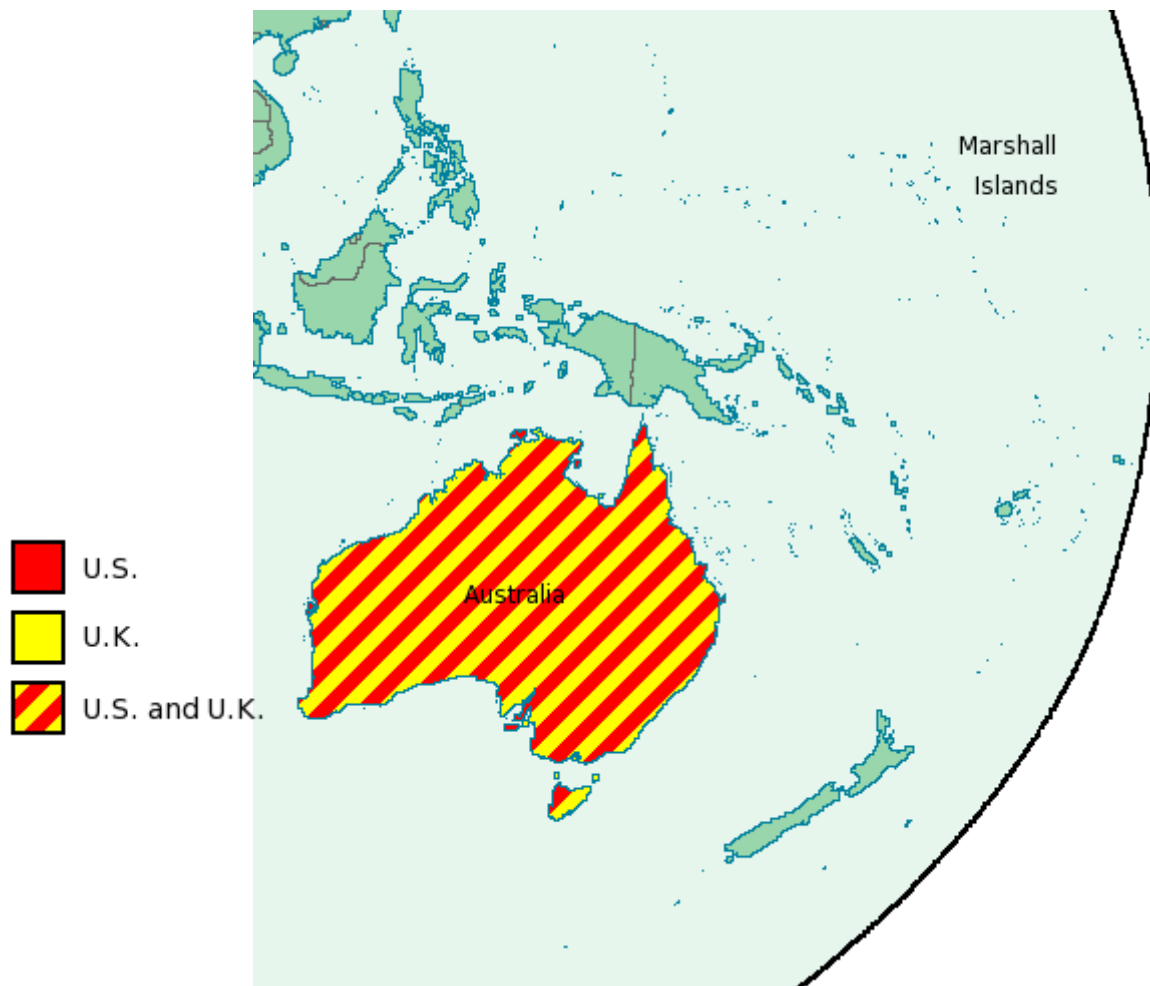


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Intervention and Exploitation: US and UK Government International Actions Since 1945

Australia and The Pacific Islands



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Summary

1941: Australia turns to the US for help in its defence after the Japanese take Singapore. Australia allows the US to base its supreme command for the Pacific war on its territory.

1975: The Gough Whitlam government is dismissed.

The British Queen declines to intervene, saying it is not proper for her to do so.

The CIA had apparently encouraged Whitlam's dismissal, because he was raising issues about the US running a control centre for spy satellites in the Australian outback, amongst other things.

1986: Australian law becomes fully independent of the British parliament and legal system.

1992: The Citizenship Act is amended to remove swearing an oath of allegiance to the British Crown.

2001: Churches rebuke Prime Minister John Howard for failing properly to acknowledge suffering of thousands of Aborigines under past assimilation policy.

2003: Australia deploys troops to the Gulf ahead of a possible war. The move sparks public protests.

Australia

1941:

The United States declares war on Japan. Australia turns to the US for help in its defence after the Japanese take Singapore. Australia allows the US to base its supreme command for the Pacific war on its territory. [1]

1948:

Australia begins a scheme for immigration from Europe. Over the next 30 years, more than 2 million people arrive, about one-third of them from Britain. [1]

1950:

Australia commits troops to the UN forces in the Korean war. [1]

1956:

Olympic Games held in Melbourne. [1]

1965:

Australia commits troops to the US war effort in Vietnam. [1]

1967:

National referendum on changes to constitution is passed. Section which excluded Aboriginal people from official census is removed. Another change enables federal government to pass laws on Aboriginal issues. [1]

1975:

Australia introduces new immigration laws, restricting the number of unskilled workers allowed into the country. [1]

The government of Gough Whitlam is plagued by resignations and the blocking of its budget by the upper house of the parliament. In an unprecedented move, the UK governor-general, Sir John Kerr, dismisses the government. A caretaker administration under Malcolm Fraser is installed. [1] [2]

Kerr's dismissal of the Whitlam is despite the upper house finally passing the supply bills and passing motions of confidence in the Whitlam Government. [2]

The speaker of the house writes to the Queen to ask her to restore Whitlam to office, but she declines to intervene, saying it is not proper for her to do so. [2]

It later transpires that the CIA had apparently encouraged Kerr to dismiss Whitlam, because he was raising issues about the the US running a control centre for spy satellites in the Australian outback, amongst other things. [3] [5]

The CIA's involvement and its operations at the spy base are, in part, revealed by Christopher Boyce, who passed information to the USSR in protest at the way the US government treated its Australian ally. Boyce was caught and convicted in 1977. [4]

1986:

The Australia Act makes Australian law fully independent of the British parliament and legal system. There is no longer any provision for Australian courts to mount final appeals to the Privy Council in London. [1]

1992:

The Citizenship Act is amended to remove swearing an oath of allegiance to the British Crown. Prime Minister Paul Keating's Labour government pledges to make Australia a republic and to concentrate on links with Asia. [1]

1993:

Keating wins elections. The Native Title Act establishes a process for the granting of Aboriginal land rights. [1]

1996:

Keating defeated in elections. John Howard of the Liberal Party becomes prime minister. [1]

1998:

Elections see Howard's Liberal and National party coalition re-elected, but with a reduced majority. Delegates to a constitutional convention vote to replace Queen Elizabeth II as head of state with a president chosen by parliament. The issue is put to a referendum in 1999. The proposal is defeated, with 55% voting to retain the status quo. [1]

2000:

Australia hosts the Olympic Games in Sydney, the most popular ever. [1]

2001:

January - Australia celebrates 100 years since its inauguration as the Commonwealth of Australia. [1]

February - Sir Donald Bradman, Australia's most famous cricketer, dies at the age of 92. [1]

May - Churches rebuke Prime Minister John Howard for failing properly to acknowledge suffering of thousands of Aborigines under past assimilation policy. Howard has refused to apologise to "Stolen Generations" of Aborigines who as children were forcibly removed from their parents to live with whites. [1]

August - Australia turns away hundreds of boat people over several months, the most prominent group having been rescued from a sinking ferry. Australia pays Nauru to detain many of them. [1]

November - Howard wins a third term in general elections. [1]

2002:

Aid agencies, rights groups and UN report criticise policy of holding asylum seekers in detention camps until their visa applications are processed. Woomera desert camp in South Australia sees riots, hunger strikes and escapes. [1]

October - The nation mourns as 88 of its citizens are killed in a night club bombing in Bali, Indonesia, which some call Australia's September 11. [1]

2003:

January - Australia deploys troops to the Gulf ahead of a possible war. The move sparks public protests. [1]

Bushfire ravages the capital, Canberra. More than 500 homes are destroyed. Other fires rage across New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania. [1]

February - Senate passes no-confidence motion against Prime Minister John Howard over his handling of Iraq crisis. It is Senate's first-ever vote of no-confidence in serving leader. [1]

May - Governor-General Peter Hollingworth resigns after admitting that, as an Anglican archbishop in the 1990s, he allowed a known paedophile remain a priest. [1]

July - Australia heads peacekeeping force intended to restore order in troubled Solomon Islands. [1]

2004:

February - Race riots in district of Sydney, sparked by death of Aboriginal teenager. [1]

March - Parliamentary committee clears government of lying about threat posed by weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. In July, report details intelligence failings over Iraq, Bali bombings, but clears government of manipulating Iraq intelligence. [1]

August - Government announces a multi-million dollar cruise missile programme, set to give Australia the region's "most lethal" air combat capacity. [1]

September - Bomb attack outside Australian embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia, kills at least nine, injures dozens more. [1]

October - John Howard wins fourth term as prime minister; his party extends its grip on parliament. [1]

November - Death of Aboriginal man in police custody sparks rioting on Palm Island, off north-east coast. [1]

2005:

January - Country's worst bush fires for more than two decades kill nine people in South Australia. [1]

Marshall Islands

1946-1996:

Nuclear testing during Operations Crossroads, Sandstone, Greenhouse, Ivy, Castle, Redwing, and Hardtack involved over 60 known atomic and hydrogen bomb tests at Enewetak and Bikini. The testing involved US imposed exile for thousands of islanders to neighboring atolls, hundreds of whom suffered from radiation poisoning and other exposure related diseases, and dozens committed suicide amidst the derelict conditions of their displacement. The US government could have decided to do anything to avoid this constant string of fiascos at little relative expense (how's an army-engineered ocean-side community in SoCal on a cushy government stipend sound, while we nuke your motherland?): it chose to do nothing. Also affected by radiation poisoning were 22 Japanese fishermen, and a number of US military personnel were also exposed. [1]